[13] ritory is close to the railroad which runs through the town of Zamora to Los Reyes. [10] The southern boundary might be defined roughly as on a line from Los Reyes to Uruapan and thence close to the railway from Uruapan to Pátzcuaro, while the new highway from Mexico City to Guadalajara in some places runs just inside the northern limits and in others, just outside. Within or near the borders of the present-day Tarascan area occur a number of old Mexican towns closely associated with the historic Tarascans and their contemporary culture, which provide the administrative centers and the major market places. These towns are [361] Pátzcuaro, Zacapu, Purépero, Zamora, Los Reyes, and Uruapan. In some instances other [563] towns of local importance have arisen more recently, towns which were once Tarascan but are now occupied by Mestizos and deculturated Tarascans. A good example of such a town is Chilchota.

[13] Viewed as a whole, the Tarascan area may be characterized generally as an elevated temperate region of sufficient rainfall, deep volcanic soils, and pine or mixed pine and hardwood forests. In detail there are differences, and a number of regions may be identified.

The easternmost region is that about Lake Pátzcuaro. The lake has an elevation of [361] slightly over 7,000 feet, and most of the villages are either on the shore or upon islands in the lake. The forests have been cleared away [311] around the lake except upon lands too steep to cultivate with the plow. Rainfall is heavy, but is concentrated in the summer months. The climate is temperate and cool even in midsummer.

North of Lake Pátzcuaro is a large fertile valley or depression near Zacapu, ringed about by hills and mountains covered with forest. Although there is but little difference in elevation from Lake Pátzcuaro, the climate is warmer and some tropical or subtropical plants such as sugarcane are grown on a small scale.

Over a range of mountains to the west of Zacapu is a fertile valley known as La Cañada. Here the climate is warmer and more arid, as [912] is evidenced by the frequency of irrigation and [241] extensive cultivation of citrus fruit, bananas, and similar tropical and subtropical plants.

[text continues on p. 57a]

1:Beals E-5 (1940-1941)1946 NU34 Tarasco NU34

[p. 7a]

West of Lake Pátzcuaro and south of La Cañada is the rugged area known as La Sierra, extending as far west as the town of Tinguindín. This region is relatively homogeneous, with an essentially temperate climate. Although the elevation of towns varies from about 6,000 feet to about 9,000 feet, generally the temperature is cool. Heavy rainfall and the presence of numerous 10,000-foot peaks apparently combine to prevent cultivation of most subtropical plants. Extensive steep, forested slopes and lava flows are interspersed with numerous valleys and depressions in a high state of cultivation. Only in the west, where rainfall apparently is less, are a few towns favored by a milder climate. South of La Cañada and about equidistant from Uruapan, Zacapu, and Pátzcuaro is Cherán, largest of the mountain Tarascan towns and, until very recent years, one of the most isolated.

Situated on a sloping bench, Cherán looks westward over a long depression, dotted with villages and interrupted here and there by cinder cones rising as much as a thousand feet above the depression (pl. 1, upper and lower, left). North and south of Cherán, the series of peaks which bound the depression to the west culminate in two 10,000-foot cones. Eastward is another smaller basin of fertile soil, similarly marked by cinder cones and by the striking isolated volcanic peak of El Pilón, also over 10,000 feet in height.

Except for occasional marginal farm clearings, the steeper slopes, and those areas where relatively recent lava flows make cultivation impossible, are covered with forest. The predominant species are three or four types of pine, but completely pure stands are rarely found. Usually there is a fair intermixture of oak and madroña, while, beginning at the level of Cherán, fir trees occur and increase in number at higher elevations. These forest lands provide one of the important resources of the Cherán population.

Wherever the land is sufficiently level to permit regular cultivation, the forest has been almost entirely cleared away. In many places, areas hundreds of acres in extent are continuously cultivated. Maize and, to a much smaller extent, wheat, are almost the only field crops. Cultivation of these, plus exploitation

1:Beals E-5 (1940-1941)1946 NU34 Tarasco NU34
Sierra Tarascans

of the forest resources and the breeding of a few sheep and cattle, provide the sustenance of the great majority of Cherán's population.

The town of Cherán has a population of about 5,000. The community is unique among Tarascan towns, not only for its large size—almost 2,000 more than that of any other settlement—but because the *municipio* of the same name contains only two, unimportant rancherias. Most *municipios* in the Tarascan area consist of one moderately large settlement, the *cabecera*, and a surrounding group of small settlements known as *tenencias*, and still smaller communities known as rancherias or by other classificatory terms. Usually the total populations of these *municipios* approximate the population of Cherán or even exceed it. Consequently, the unique feature of the *municipio* of Cherán is the concentration of almost the entire population in the *cabecera*.

Despite the concentration of population in the *cabecera*, the *municipio* of Cherán comprises a large area. Much of this area is mountain and forest, but there are many relatively large tracts of arable land (maps 2, 3). This circumstance, in part at least, has been the cause of numerous boundary disputes and some loss of territory. The most notable recent loss of territory has been the secession of the one *tenencia* of Cherán, the rather large settlement of Cheranástico to the northwest, which seceded in 1939 and joined the *municipio* of Paracho. The immediate cause of this secession again appears to have been a boundary dispute between the *tenencia* and the *cabecera*.

Cherán differs from the ordinary Tarascan agricultural village only in size. Throughout the area the type of settlement is the compact village. Probably in most cases the villages represent settlements of Spanish type, with a central plaza about which are the church (sometimes not actually on the plaza), the municipal building, and, more recently, the school. From the central plaza radiates a rectangular grid of streets, modified only where necessitated by the irregular terrain (maps 4, 5). In the case of a large settlement such as Cherán, there usually exists some fragmentary legend of origin of the settlement through amalgamation of aboriginal groups dispersed

[text continues on p. 12a]

1: Beals E-5 (1940-1941) 1946

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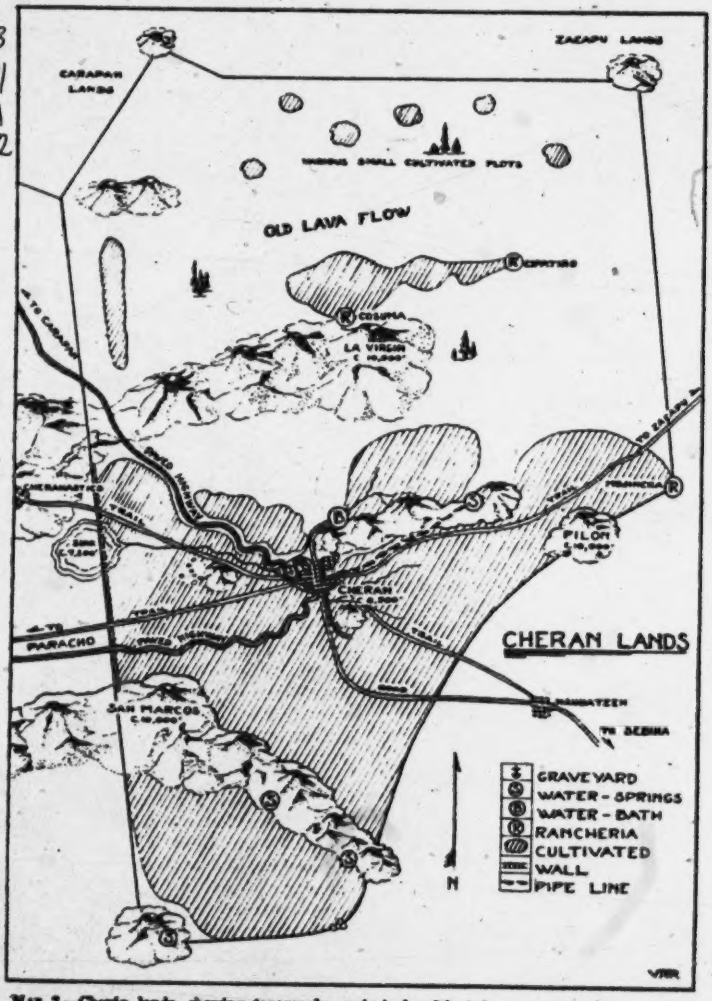

MAP 2.—Cheran lands, showing topography, principal cultivated areas, and various cultural features.

[p. 8]

136 to the fauna is equally unsatisfactory. Despite the extensive forests, wild life is scarce. No
136 one in Cherán gets a living from hunting, and
224 the amount of game taken forms an inconsiderable amount of the food supply. Deer and peccary are sometimes hunted and occasionally damage outlying fields, but they do not seem to be numerous. Squirrels, rabbits, wild pigeons, and quail are among the animals of most economic importance. Badgers are known, but are not eaten. An exception to the general scarcity of wild life is the coyote. This animal appears to be numerous and to be a danger to livestock in the outskirts of the town. Larger predatory animals, such as the jaguar and the mountain lion, are unknown. Informants could recall only one mountain lion being seen or killed in the vicinity of the town. The region is, of course, too high for the absence of the jaguar to be surprising, but smaller members of the genus *Felis* are also rare. Only the wildcat is reported. The rattlesnake and *culebrilla* occur, but are not common. As there are few handicrafts practiced in Cherán, the community is consequently primarily agricul-
[311] tural and the only use of the forests is for lumbering, charcoal making, and grazing.

Little need be said about the people of Cherán
142 or their language. Although white admixture certainly exists in the town's population, there
[144] are virtually no acknowledged Mestizos. Until studies of the Tarascan population are completed, it perhaps will suffice to say that the people of Cherán seem to be typical Tarascans, on the average relatively short and slender, although stocky individuals are not uncommon. Their complexion is relatively dark, the hair is straight, and the features are attractive. Cor-
164 pulence in old age is very rare. Goiter or
147 incipient goiter is common, especially in the mountain towns, although the disease is less frequent in Cherán than in many other settlements. Teeth are bad, a condition observed for the area in pre-Columbian remains also. Not only are caries frequent, but malocclusion is common. Individuals with attractive regular teeth are the exception. (Pls. 1, upper and lower right; 2; 3, center and lower right and left.)

197 The language of Cherán is Tarascan, a tongue which shows relatively few dialectic differences.

241

Maguey (agave)	Crab apples
Chayote	*Zapote blanco*

The above list is but a portion of the total number of varieties cultivated by the Tarascans in other villages. Plants used in Cherán but [438] grown in other villages include onion, garlic, tomato (several types), chile (many kinds), sugarcane, sweetpotato, banana, lime, lemon, orange, guava, mamey, mango, watermelon, canteloup, avocado, *zapote negro*, and cherimoya.

TYPES OF FARM LANDS

311 The lands cultivated by the Cherán Tarascans
134 all have soils almost exclusively composed of volcanic ash or cinders. However, low-lying areas which receive materials washed from the higher ground are usually more fertile and in a few specially favored spots may be cultivated annually. As a general rule, however, lands are cultivated only in alternate years.

311 Cherán lands are of five main categories: (1) "Plains" or valley floors, which may include some gently sloping or rolling areas but which are relatively flat; (2) patches of sloping land capable of permanent cultivation; (3) small areas of level land, usually called "*joyas*," consisting of small valleys, depressions in the midst of lava flows, which were not covered by lava, and the level depressions in the craters of cinder cones; (4) relatively level or gently sloping garden plots within the town; (5) temporary fields on the steeper slopes of the mountains.

[423] The so-called "plains" consist of several large areas (maps 2, 3), subdivided in numerous privately owned plots. Maize and wheat are
241 the principal crops grown. The "plains" are
311 cultivated in alternate years under supervision of the town government. Harvest dates are fixed by the town council; after the final date, the "plains" become community pasture. Fencing of individual plots is not permitted, nor is planting in consecutive years. Therefore, men who own land in only one "plain" plant only every other year. Consequently, everyone tries to have land in at least two "plains."

311 The largest "plain," usually referred to simply as *el plan*, is west of Cherán, extending from the foot of the slope below the town to the

1:Beals E-5 (1940-1941)1946 NU34 Tarasco NU34

[p.21q]

311 boundary with Aranza and Cheranástico (pl. 1, upper left). The second most important "plain" is south and southeast of the town and extends on the east to the boundary with Nahuatzen. On the north and south the plain is bounded by hills and mountains, on the west by the slope to *el plan*. This area is usually referred to as Sharicho (šaričo). The *"plan* of Arantepacuaro" is south of the range of mountains of San Marcos, and extends to the boundary of Arantepacuaro on the south. The fourth and smallest "plain" of importance is northeast of the mountain of El Pilón.

Patches of sloping land under permanent cultivation are found scattered throughout the *municipio*. A large number of plots are found on the slope between *el plan* and the town and on the lower, gentler slopes of many mountains and cinder cones. These lands may be fenced or, more commonly, protected by deep ditches with hedges of agave on each side. Thorny crab apple or other fruit trees sometimes are also planted along ditches. Weak spots may be guarded by thorny brush and poles (pl. 4, lower left).

The so-called "joyas" are usually patches of only a few acres, often in isolated places far from town. They may be fenced or ditched to keep out animals and, like the other areas, are privately owned. Unless they are unusually fertile, *"joyas"* are cultivated only every other year.

The garden plots are within the town proper. In a few cases they may occupy an entire block, but normally they are merely part of a building lot (*solar*). Few of them are as large as half an acre. They are fenced and, unlike any other areas, they are cultivated every year.

Temporary fields are created by clearing the forest on community lands. Permission must [656] be obtained from the Federal Department of Forestry, Hunting and Fishing. Extra forest [651] taxes must be paid, but charges are nominal. Usually the areas cleared are steep and the soil is poor and badly leached. Frequently, serious erosion results from such fields. Although cultivated only in alternate years, these fields are short-lived and are abandoned after a decade or so. Only use rights exist for such fields and after abandonment they revert to the public domain.

1:Beals E-5 (1940-1941)1946 NU34 Tarasco NU34

[156] mally either refuse information or obviously
423 lie about the size and value of their holdings.
435 The only further evidence available on this point is an actual sale observed in which a price of $40 was paid for about one-half hectare of wheat land. This piece was already planted to wheat and would yield about 2 *cargas*. On the other hand, $400 was being asked for a hectare of the best maize land.

Residential lands almost always include a garden plot as well as a building site. Only in the center of town is this not true. Prices of residential land, however, vary sharply with location and, to a lesser extent, with the depth of the lot and the quality of soil. In the center of town shallow lots may be valued at as much as $25 a meter frontage, while on the outskirts the price may be as low as $10 a meter. The garden plot produces blue maize, vegetables, fruit, and sometimes wheat. Probably a number of persons who were said to own land in Cherán actually own only a large residential plot, but this point was not investigated.

423 Forest lands are owned by the community.
311 They serve as the source of firewood, lumber, and other forest products such as shakes and charcoal, and provide grazing for livestock; as sources of game or wild vegetable products their value is negligible.

311 The use of forest lands formerly was open to
656 all who paid a small fee to aid the community to pay the Federal taxes on the land. Persons using the forest only for firewood paid less than did charcoal burners, lumbermen, or shakemakers. In recent years a permit from the Federal Department of Forestry has been required for any but household use, and efforts were being made to limit rights to members of a cooperative organization.

LABOR

462 The sex division of labor in Cherán bars women from most productive pursuits. Women's activities conform closely to the ideals laid down recently by a notorious central European —children, kitchen, and church. Women perform all the household duties, such as cooking, sweeping, and washing, care for the children, make most of the clothes, carry water (but not firewood unless they have no close male relatives), and take food to their men at work.

231 amount of labor. Not only must *rastrojo* be
243 cut, but the animals must be visited every 2 or
3 days while in pasture.

427 The question may be raised why horses or
434 mules have not replaced oxen to any extent. Although horses or mules will do at least twice the amount of work in a day, owing to their greater speed and ability to work longer hours, they do not thrive on the corn fodder, wheat straw, and scanty pasturage. Grain feed is also necessary, at least during the working season. In general, horses and mules are more delicate and require more attention, greater skill, and better shelter. Finally, their initial cost is greater and they cannot be slaughtered for meat, as are oxen, when they have outlived their usefulness as draft animals.

Wheat.—Although wheat is the primary cash
243 crop of Cherán, it is seldom grown on lands
433 which will produce good maize. Wheat is often
311 grown on inferior land, often on slopes, but never on really bad lands. Farmers using good land for wheat usually have a surplus of maize lands.

243 The cultivation of wheat takes a little less
461 labor than does that of maize. Plowing is the
433 same or perhaps a little less (the second plowing being shallower). Broadcasting of seed and harrowing equate with maize planting, but it is a one-man job and requires no oxen if the farmer owns a burro. The primitive harvesting with a sickle would seem to call for more labor, but estimates were fairly low. A summary of estimates for cultivating a hectare follows:

Labor:	*Days*	
First plowing	10	
Second plowing	10	
Sowing and harrowing	2	(or less)
Harvesting	4½	
Total labor	26½	
Costs:		
Labor (26½ days at $0.45, value)	$11.92	
Rent of oxen (20 days at $0.75, value)	15.00	
Taxes	1.00	
Seed	1.00	
Total production costs	$28.92	
Interest on capital investment	11.00	
Total cost of cultivation	$39.92	

1: Beals E-5 (1940-1941) 1946

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Sierra Tarascans

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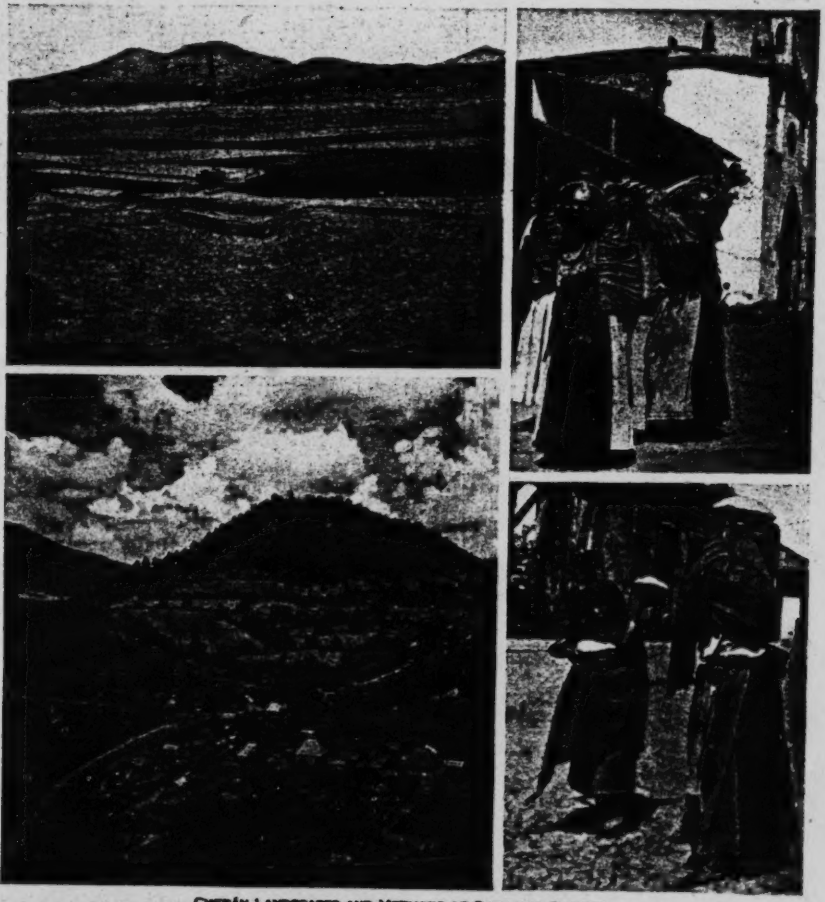

CHERÁN LANDSCAPES AND METHODS OF CARRYING OBJECTS.

Upper (left): The plains below Cherán, the major agricultural area, about 7,000 feet elevation, viewed from the highway, near southeast corner of the town. Darker portions are plowed fields; the remainder not yet plowed. *Upper (right):* Women carrying water in typical manner, with the usual Cherán water jar. A method of wearing the *rebozo* is shown. The church and priest's residence are in background. *Lower (left):* The northwest *barrio* of Cherán. The new highway curves along the edge of the barranca. Typical cultivated fields slope gently up to the cinder cone, which rises 1,000 feet above the town. *Lower (right):* Carrying bowls of masa (corn ground for tortillas) from the mill. Carrying on the head is unusual, but the method used by the girl is common for small objects. The woman's shirt has the thick pleat or rollo.

[End Plate 1]

2:Carrasco E4-4, 5 (1945)1952
[P. 169] NU34 Tarasco NU34
Patzcuaro

175 ance of native speech in those areas, a pro-
464 cess which began in the late eighteenth
177 century and was greatly accelerated after Independence.

In central Michoacan, the Sierra and the
175 Lake areas (except the southern shore),
438 the land-holding villages predominated and were devoted mainly to agriculture and handicrafts.[24]

175 During the Profirio Díaz period, the ap-
668 plication of the Reforma Laws abolishing
423 communal property, and the economic development of the country brought about further growth of the haciendas.

In Tzintzuntzan, the formerly communal lands were distributed among the villagers, and individual titles had been given by 1885. Between 1885 and 1902, a large part of the best agricultural land and most of the communal, non-agricultural lands were sold, legally or otherwise, to outsiders who, with these lands, established haciendas.[25]

[311] In the swamp of Zacapu, a company was formed at the end of the century in order to reclaim swamp land. Thus, several haciendas were established in a swamp, which had been the property of the neighboring Indian towns. At least one of these haciendas seems to have managed to acquire further land from the village of Tarejero.[26]

175 In many towns, however, the Indians re-
423 sisted the operation of the Reforma laws during most of the nineteenth century.

In 1902, the state legislature passed a law
648 regarding the distribution of the property
656 of extinct Indian communities (*Ley y reglamento sobre reparto de bienes de las extinguidas communidades indígenas*, 18 de junio y 4 de julio 1902). It provided that the formerly communal land of the Indians could not be sold or mortgaged; that in order to distribute the land every town should appoint two representatives; that in case the state government did not approve of the town's choice of representatives it should appoint attorneys (*apoderados*); that the towns should entrust their land titles to the authorities; and that if the towns did not appoint representatives after a certain period of time the government would name the attorneys. In most cases it was the government which appointed the attorneys.

This procedure apparently was intended to keep the lands from being sold to non-Indians, but although the land of the villages was not sold outright, it was leased

24. West, 1948, 11-18.
25. Foster, 1948, 171-2.
26. Simpson, 1937, 464-6.

2:Carasco E-4, 5 (1945)1952
[P. 176] NU34 Tarasco NU34
Pátzcuaro

tzen[42] and Jarácuaro. This was particularly the case in towns near haciendas to which they had lost their lands, as, for instance, in the villages on the southern shore of Lake Pátzcuaro. Work in those haciendas was essential to the livelihood of the villages.[43]

These differences in wealth within the villages were responsible for the splitting of the villages into opposite parties in relation to the conflicts unleashed by the Revolution, which will be described below. No matter how violent this conflict became at times, it should always be kept in mind that these disrupting factors were never more than a tendency. The concentration of property was not large enough to lead to the formation of haciendas, and the village as a functioning economic unit was not destroyed. There are other factors, relating to land tenure and agricultural methods, to which can be ascribed the basic conservatism of the villages which still keeps the community together.

Practically every village has some communal lands left. Permanent agricultural lands are still communal in only five of the ten Cañada villages. There, title to the land is held by the town, but within the town private property prevails, and land can be inherited and sold among villagers.[44] Some other towns have, besides the individually owned lands, communal croplands which are worked in common, usually by the landless farmers, their produce going in part to the workers, in part to the town.[45] Forest land is communal everywhere, and all villagers have the right to gather wood or to farm temporary clearings. Only recently (in the 1930's), have the Federal Forest Laws required the payment of a tax and securing of a permit for those activities.[46]

Although cultivated lands are privately owned the agricultural technique demands the cooperation of the whole community. Beals thus describes this system in Cherán:

> "The so-called 'plains' consist of several large areas, subdivided in numerous privately owned plots. Maize and wheat are the principal crops grown. The 'plains' are cultivated in alternate years under supervision of the town government. Harvest dates are fixed by the town council; after the final date, the 'plains' become community pasture. Fencing of individual plots is not permitted, nor is planting in consecutive

42. Beals, 1946, 61.
43. León, 1934, 155.
44. West, 1948, 32-33.
45. Loc. cit.
46. West, 1948, 33; Beals, 1946, 31, 59, 60; Mendieta y Núñez, 1940, 279; Foster, 1948, 170-1.

2:Carrasco E-4, 5 (1945)1952
[P. 189] NU34 Tarasco NU34
Pátzcuaro

241 years. Therefore, men who own land in only
311 one 'plain' plant only every other year. Conse-
621 quently, everyone tries to have land in at least two 'plains'."[47]

Similarly in Jarácuaro, the whole island is divided into two sections which are alternately cultivated.

West describes this system as general in the Sierra.[48]

[609] Given this system of cultivation, the resistance against selling land to outsiders is easily understandable as all farmers have to work in close agreement. Any outsider using his land in a different way would disrupt the whole system.

This question of disintegrative versus
182 conservative tendencies within the villages
621 can also be discussed in relation to a sub-
438 sistence economy or a market economy. No
433 doubt, in proportion as production is for consumption within the village, the easier it is for the community to hold its own against disrupting influences; the more it is intended for a larger market, the more likely it is that outside influences will penetrate the life of the community.

439 The connection of any Tarascan village
433 economy, whether agricultural or depending on crafts, to the national and world markets is undisputed and has been set forth clearly.[49] Part of the agricultural products, practically all handicrafts, and a sizable amount of labor are sold out by producers, while most consumption goods are bought from outside, with the exception of part of the food (housing and clothing to a much lesser extent). However, production of food, mainly corn for the villagers' own consumption, is basic to the economy of the villages and their relation to the national economy. This fact determines their attitude toward land and corn.

423 Land is the most desired form of property
435 and the safest way of investing money, because of the security it will give as a source
[185] of corn. The ability to produce one's own corn is the supreme aspiration of every farmer.

433 An analysis of agricultural economics
241 shows that farming on poor land in Cherán (a prosperous farming town) and Tzintzuntzan is done at a loss; that is, production costs (equipment, taxes, labor, etc.) are greater than the value of the crop.[50] Owners of such lands could earn more by hiring out as laborers than by working their own fields.[51] This way of farming

47. Beals, 1946, 20.
48. West, 1948, 26.
49. Beals, 1946, 88-9; Foster, 1948, 145-6, 289-90.
50. Foster, 1948, 76-8, table 14; Beals, 1946, 85-6.
51. Foster, 1948, 78.

133 higher hills and mountains rise 2,600 to 4,000 feet above the surrounding plains.

The young volcanic land forms found in the Sierra are lacking in much of the northern area, where the principal elevations consist of eroded composite Tertiary volcanoes. A few tongues of Recent lava flow from the Sierra into the northern edge of the plains, and cinder cones extend northward from El Zirate. Many lakes, some occupying structural basins, dot the northern area. The extensive sections of old alluvium, which form a good part of the plains, probably represent beds of Pleistocene lakes. At the northern and northwestern base of the Sierra many spring-fed lakes and marshes existed in historical times, e. g., Ciénaga de Zacapu, de Tangancícuaro, de Chapala, etc. The lacustrine basins and the borders of the former lakes and marshes were the major areas of Spanish settlement in the Tarascan North, for both afforded year-round pasture and sites for irrigated wheat farms. Some marshy sections [311] still exist, but natural desiccation and artifical drainage have converted much of the wet area to dry farmland. The once extensive chain of lakes in the Cotija graben, west of the Sierra, has almost completely disappeared, and the marshes of Zacapu, around which are grouped a few remnant Tarascan pueblos, have been converted into a large farming area.

A unique physiographic subarea of the northern zone, called "La Cañada," a narrow east-west depression at the northern base of the Sierra, is still one of the significant Tarascan regions. The valley floor, 10 km. long and 2 km. wide, decreases rapidly in altitude from 6,360 feet at its eastern end to 5,840 feet at Chilchota, near the western extremity (pl. 1). The western end of the valley is marked by an ancient lava flow, which once partially blocked normal drainage. Subsequent deposition of alluvium (possibly lacustrine) behind the lava dam has resulted in the present wide flattish floor of the valley's western half. Today the stream draining the valley flows subsequently through a deep gorge cut through the northern end of the lava flow. The numerous intermittent streams which descend from the adjacent hills have built up small alluvial fans along the valley sides. Like other areas at the edge of the Sierra, [312] La Cañada is favored by numerous large springs [361] issuing from fissures at the southern and eastern borders of the depression. Alluvium and water

4: West K-5 (1946) 1948 NU34 Tarasco NU34
[p. 32a]

342 177 within or near pine forests. By 1789 most of the buildings in Tarascan towns in the Lake and Sierra regions were roofed with shakes (map 18). Today in the towns bordering the Sierra the red Castilian tile has completely replaced *tejamanil* and is slowly penetrating into the Sierra towns.[42]

THE LAND SYSTEM AND THE PUEBLO

621 423 Tarascan settlements are fundamentally agricultural villages. They include not only dwellings arranged along streets and in house lots, but also the surrounding farm land. The land is the body of the pueblo, whose political and economic life revolves around land ownership and boundaries, crop planting and harvesting.

423 311 Few records exist on the ancient Tarascan land system; most lands, however, were probably held in common. Each community owned surrounding lands, the limits of which were determined by metes and bounds; the record and adjudication of pueblo boundaries were in the hands of the village chief, who apportioned agricultural plots to his subjects.[44] As in many modern Indian areas of Mexico, the aboriginal concept of village lands and their established boundaries is indurated in the present political and economic structure of the Tarascan pueblos.[45] Such holdings in the Sierra include various types of land: *monte*, or woodland pasture on steep mountain slopes and on lava flows; cropland in basin floors (*planes*, t'pákua), on lower mountain slopes (*laderas*, uanáten), and in craters of cinder cones (*joyas*, t'pákua-supíču). In La Cañada often the following lands are held by a given pueblo: irrigable alluvium on the valley floor, *temporal* lands and *monte* on the adjacent slopes, and *humedad* lands in the Sierra. In the Lake area types of land vary from pueblo to pueblo. Often small strips of irrigable vegetable plots are held along the lake shore; most towns hold *temporal* land on the lower slopes; those on

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[42] Although used in most Spanish towns (except mining centers) in New Spain since the late 16th century, tiles began to appear in the Lake Pátzcuaro district only in the late 18th century. In 1789 Pátzcuaro was the only town in the vicinity with tile roofs (approximately 50 percent of the houses were roofed with tile, the remainder, with shakes). In the same year one house in Naranja boasted of a tile roof. (AGN Historia, vol. 73, ff. 288, 318.)

[44] A copy of an aboriginal land title (1819) of Cheranátzicurín is extant in AGN Tierras, vol. 867, exped. 3.

[45] In many respects the native land system in central Mexico paralleled that of 16th century Spain. Particularly was this true in regard to the concept of village holdings.

4: West K-5 (1946) 1948 NU34 Tarasco NU34
[P. 32-b]

[423] [311] the western and southern shore often have fields in the Sierra.

Two systems of land ownership—communal and private—prevail in most of modern Tarasca. Since the land reforms of 1915, the *ejido*, a third type of holding, has displaced most of the haciendas around the margins of the Sierra.

Since Spanish contact most of the Tarascan agricultural land has become private property of family heads. Even in the few remaining pueblos which claim complete communal ownership of their lands, a strong individualization of property has developed. The historical process of the shift from communal to private ownership is not clear. Late 18th-century documents on land disputes among the Tarascan pueblos indicate that at that time the communal system prevailed at least in the Sierra. The issuance of individual land titles may not have occurred until after the reforms of 1857. In the Sierra private landholders (*propietarios*) often possess one or more plots in the *plan*, and still others on the less fertile *laderas*. Size of individual holdings varies greatly, since land is purchasable. Normal holdings average 2 to 3 hectares per family. Traces of the communal concept exist in the minds of the modern proprietors. Although legally possible, there is little desire to sell land to nonmembers of the community. If such a transaction should arise, it usually must be approved by the town council.[46] Consequently, pueblo lands are kept intact. Moreover, individual holdings, especially those in the *plan*, are rarely enclosed, for after harvest the fields are used as communal pasture.[47] Accordingly, the final date for removal of crops and the first date for planting in unenclosed lands of each pueblo is communally regulated.

Vestiges of the ancient land system are retained in the special communal holdings found in most modern Tarascan villages. Five pueblos in La Cañada—Tanaquillo, Acachuén, Ichán, Tacuro, and Carapan—retain communal ownership of all lands, at least in name. Family heads are allotted one plot of *temporal* near the pueblo and another of *humedad* in the Sierra to the south and east. The individual allotments vary from 2 to 4

[623] [351]

[46] The Tarascan town council is normally composed of the *representante del pueblo* and his committee of six. The *representante* deals with most internal affairs of the pueblo.

[47] Fences and ditches are used most frequently to divide cultivated lands from pasture and to separate individual holdings on the *laderas*, or slope land.

4/23 Before the promulgation of the Federal forest laws
● 3/1 (1930's), all members of the pueblo reserved the
[656] right to cut wood and lumber in the *monte* with permission of the *representante*. Today a Federal tax must be paid (but is often evaded) by each pueblo for lumber rights. Small plots of land (*desmontes*) may be cleared and planted in any part of the forest, but the farmer must first gain permission of the *representante* and his committee. In addition to the *monte* many pueblos possess certain croplands, called *tierras de la comunidad*, which are not assigned permanently to individuals, but are worked communally, usually by landless farmers, who receive a portion of the harvest as remuneration. The remainder of the crop is often stored in the pueblo as communal property to be sold by the *representante* for the town treasury or to be used as food in time of shortage.

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24/ still forms the leading crop complex, but the
177 European grains—wheat, barley, the broadbean and lentil—have become intimately associated with Tarascan agriculture. European fruits are grown with native types; Old World vegetables, mainly cabbage, have become an integral part of native food habits. But the modern Tarascan considers such crops, most of which were introduced over 400 years ago, as part of his aboriginal culture. Furthermore, although Tarascans still practice pre-Columbian shifting agriculture on steep slopes, the Old World plow has transformed indigenous cultivation on level and gently sloping lands.

Agricultural acculturation continues constantly. Tarascan *braceros* returning from the United States have brought in apple cuttings from the Yakima Valley, grapevines from California, corn from Iowa. Within the last three decades a South American *Oxalis* (*papa de Castilla*) has been introduced in the Sierra south and west of Lake Pátzcuaro. Again, alfalfa cultivation is slowly penetrating into many parts of the Sierra. Recent-
[654] ly the Federal Government introduced a few steel plows in some Tarascan villages, and here and there one sees engine-powered threshing machines slowly replacing the ancient European threshing floor and flail.